

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claim 8 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein. Please amend Claims 1, 6, and 9 as shown below.

1. (Currently Amended) A process for forming on a substrate a transparent conductive film having crystallizability, the process comprising:

a first step of forming a film at a first film formation rate; ~~and~~

a second step of forming a film at a second film formation ~~rate, rate; and~~

a third step of forming a film at a third film formation rate, with the third step being carried out after the second step,

wherein the relationship between film formation rates in the respective steps satisfies:

$$2 \leq (\text{second film formation rate})/(\text{first film formation rate}) \leq 100;$$

$$2 \leq (\text{third film formation rate})/(\text{first film formation rate}) < 100; \text{ and}$$

$$(\text{second film formation rate}) > (\text{third film formation rate}).$$

2. (Previously Presented) The transparent conductive film formation process according to claim 1, wherein, in the first step, nuclei are formed on the substrate, and, in the second step, the film is so formed as to cover the substrate surface and the surfaces of the nuclei over their whole area.

3. (Original) The transparent conductive film formation process according to claim 1, wherein, in the first step, the film is formed in a thickness of from 1 nm to 100 nm.

4. (Original) The transparent conductive film formation process according to claim 1, wherein, in the second step, the film is formed in a thickness of 5 μm or less.

5. (Original) The transparent conductive film formation process according to claim 1, wherein, in the second step, the film is formed in a thickness of 1 μm or less.

6. (Currently Amended) The transparent conductive film formation process according to claim 1, wherein, in the first step, the first step is carried out such that the average distance between the apexes of hills themselves of the film formed in the first step and the average distance between the apexes of hills of the film formed in the first step and the substrate surface are in a ratio of from 1:3 to 4:1.

7. (Original) The transparent conductive film formation process according to claim 1, wherein the transparent conductive film is formed by a roll-to-roll method in which a continuous substrate is put across rollers and transported therebetween.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) The transparent conductive film formation process according to ~~claim 8~~ claim 1, wherein, in the third step, the film is formed in a thickness of 5 μm or less.

10. (Original) The transparent conductive film formation process according to claim 1, wherein the transparent conductive film is formed by sputtering.

11. (Original) The transparent conductive film formation process according to claim 10, wherein, in the second step, a target having been subjected to pre-sputtering is used.

12. (Previously Presented) A process for producing a photovoltaic device, the process comprising the steps of:

forming a transparent conductive film by the process according to claim 1; and
forming a semiconductor layer.

13. (Original) A transparent conductive film formed by the process according to claim 1.

14. (Original) A photovoltaic device comprising a transparent conductive film formed by the process according to claim 1.

15. (Previously Presented) The transparent conductive film formation process according to claim 1, wherein the transparent conductive film comprises zinc oxide, tin oxide, indium oxide, titanium oxide, or a composite of any of these oxides.